

U.S. Appln. No. 09/899,656
Reply to Office Action dated November 15, 2005

PATENT
450100-4673.1

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

Claims 18-20 and 22-32 are currently pending. Claims 18, 24, 25 and 30-32 are independent. Claims 18, 19, 22, 24-26 and 30-32 are hereby amended. Claim 21 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of any subject matter. No new matter has been introduced. It is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, were in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

Independent claims 18, 24, 25 and 30-32 have been amended to incorporate features of claim 21 which was indicated as allowable. Therefore, independent claims 18, 24, 25 and 30-32 are allowable.

The other claims are dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

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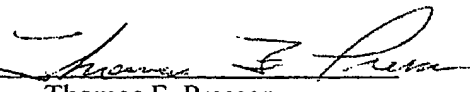
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

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